

means taking responsibility as careful, courteous drivers and pedestrians.

Americans who use the white cane deserve not only the respect and courtesy of others but also the right to equal opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) that I signed 2 years ago affirmed the rights of persons with disabilities and strengthened our Nation's commitment to eliminating the physical and attitudinal barriers that, in the past, prevented these individuals from participating fully in the mainstream of American life. Today the United States is providing a model for the world as we work toward full and harmonious implementation of the ADA.

In order to ensure that every American is prepared for the opportunities that life offers, we are also working through the AMERICA 2000 program to promote lifelong learning and achievement. The many Americans who have obtained training in use of the white cane have demonstrated their appreciation of the value of learning far beyond the traditional classroom, and their efforts should challenge and inspire others.

Recognizing the importance of the white cane to Americans with visual impairments, the Congress, in 1964, by Public Law 88-628, designated October 15 of each year as "White Cane Safety Day" and requested the President to issue annually a proclamation in observance of this day.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim October 15, 1992, as White Cane Safety Day. I encourage all Americans to observe this day with appropriate programs and activities in recognition of the interests and achievements of persons who use the white cane.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-seventh day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventeenth.

GEORGE BUSH

#### **Proclamation 6482 of October 1, 1992**

### **Mental Illness Awareness Week, 1992**

*By the President of the United States of America  
A Proclamation*

Advances in biomedical research and the behavioral sciences have dramatically improved our ability to prevent, diagnose, and treat mental illness—a public health problem that continues to call for greater public awareness and understanding.

Once clouded by mystery and shame, mental illness actually refers to a range of diseases, such as schizophrenia and depression, that may affect individuals of any age, race, or walk of life. In fact, it is estimated that as many as one-fourth of all Americans will suffer from a mental disorder at some point in their lives. The price to our Nation in terms of lost productivity, health care expenses, and other costs may total as

much as \$300 billion a year, according to the Department of Health and Human Services.

The suffering experienced by persons with mental illness is tremendous, as their conditions may deprive them of the ability to lead full, independent, and productive lives. Far too many of these individuals suffer from stigmatization by others as well, leading to a sense of rejection and alienation.

In order to dispel myths and misconceptions about mental illness and to help individuals and families who are affected by it, researchers in both the public and private sectors are working hard to unlock the secrets of the human mind. In recognition of their efforts and as a sign of our Nation's commitment to further progress in neuroscience, I proclaimed the 1990s the "Decade of the Brain." This is a time of unprecedented opportunity and hope as we work to promote the mental health and the overall well-being of all Americans.

The National Institute of Mental Health, the Federal Government agency that funds most of the mental health research in the United States, is making a major effort to inform Americans about mental disorders and their treatment. In addition, under the ADAMHA Reorganization Act that I signed in July, the Federal Government will concentrate its services for persons who suffer from, or are vulnerable to, mental illness and addictive disorders. By integrating into the National Institutes of Health the National Institute of Mental Health, the National Institute on Drug Abuse, and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, we will bring research on mental illness and addictive disorders into the mainstream of biomedical and behavioral research.

The Federal Government is, of course, joined in its efforts by many private researchers and voluntary organizations, including organizations that have been established by persons who have overcome mental illness. These individuals are helping to promote new scientific and medical breakthroughs while also educating the public about the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of mental illness. This week, we salute all of these volunteers and professionals and reaffirm our support of their noble work.

The Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 287, has designated the week of October 4 through October 10, 1992, as "Mental Illness Awareness Week" and has requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week of October 4 through October 10, 1992, as Mental Illness Awareness Week. I invite all Americans to join with members of the health care community in observing this week with appropriate programs and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventeenth.

GEORGE BUSH